


[Home](#) » [Read](#) » [Stories](#) » [A Tale Of Two Boys](#)

A Tale Of Two Boys

Written by Margaret Langdon

Monday, 09 August 2010

It's funny how miracles can have ordinary-looking exteriors, writes Margaret Langdon.

One recent Sunday, I watched my 13-year-old son play football. It was a miserable day - a bitter wind drove fat drops of rain across the muddy field and into the faces of the spectators, huddled along the fence line in their jackets and scarves.

Max's team was getting thrashed. I shivered and wished I was at home, curled up on the couch with a hot cup of tea.

Finally the siren went and I watched the group of mud-stained teenagers walk off the field, and marvelled at how big and strong they looked. Where had my little boy gone? Max walked alongside one of his best mates; a tall, handsome boy called Sam.

Watching the two of them walking together discussing the game, my frozen brain flashed back to a time when the boys were little - five years old and just starting school.

New Adventure

I remembered a glorious summer's morning, when the school year was only a few days old. Max was excited to be at proper school with the 'big kids', and every day was an adventure.

Max and I walked across the damp grass on the oval, holding hands, the early sun warming our backs and sparkling in the drops of dew. He was still happy with the hand-holding scenario in those days, but only if there was nothing better to do. On this particular day he saw a group of boys from his grade playing a ball game. I felt his hand start to wriggle out of mine.

"Oh, there's James. Hi, James!" He looked up at me, grinning under his wide-brimmed hat. "Can I go and play with them, Mummy?" His cheeks were flushed with the excitement of belonging to a gang now.

"Well, okay," I said. "But not for long, because the bell will go soon . . ." I don't think he heard the end of my sentence. He was already racing across the grass, his schoolbag bouncing on his back.

I was too far away to hear the rejection, but I saw it - clear as anything. Max's shoulders droop as he turned away from the other boys. I saw the brightness leave his face and the bounce of adventure leave his step. He walked back to me, feet dragging.

"James said I couldn't play, Mummy. He told me to go away." His blue eyes were bright with unshed tears.

"Oh, that's a shame, but never mind," I said, in what I hoped was a light and breezy voice. "Let's go and find someone *nice* to play with."

Trembling Lip

I gave a sideways glare to James and his bouncy ball, but I had more urgent matters than my indignation to deal with. Max's tears were starting to drip down his flushed cheeks. A trembling lip signalled the probability of full-on sobbing. I didn't want my boy to arrive at the line-up area bawling like a baby. This could cause a serious credibility problem. I imagined Max languishing at the bottom of the school pecking order - alone and bereft

I racked my brain for a solution. Nothing! We were approaching the milling hordes of children and parents, and I knew the seconds were ticking towards bell-time. I felt sick with Max's pain of rejection and my own paralysing uncertainty. We needed a miracle.



LOGIN

Have an account? [Login](#)
 Don't have an account? [Register](#)
[Lost Password?](#)

FOLLOW US

 [Follow us on Facebook](#)

 [Follow us on Twitter](#)

It's funny how miracles can have ordinary-looking exteriors. Our miracle arrived in the guise of a boy from Max's class. He came trotting towards us, his sturdy legs clad in navy shorts and white socks, and his dark hair neatly parted on one side. His face held a big, friendly smile.

"Hi, Max. Do you want to line up with me?"

"Okay," said Max, and I saw his face undergo a second transformation for the morning. He grinned back. One big sniff, a swift wipe with the back of his hand, and those tears had never happened.

"Bye, Mummy!" he said, and gave me an impatient kiss. I watched them run off together, their square boys' hands linked, their shiny shoes brushing the dewy grass. "Thank you, Sam," I whispered.

Now I see them again, clattering out of the change room in football boots, their sturdy shoulders streaked with mud.

"Bye, Sammy," says Max with his new, deeper voice. "See ya tomorrow."

"Yeah, see ya, Maxie," says Sam, and they do that weird handshake teenage boys do.

I watch them both and smile.

About the author: Margaret Langdon is a freelance writer, student, wanna-be novelist and single mum to two lovely kids who are growing up fast. She lives in Melbourne.



Comment Form

 We have detected that you're not a registered member, or you've not logged in.

[Register your FREE account now](#) to leave your own comment and help us build a great online community for parents across Australia.

Discuss (4 posts)



blackette

A Tale Of Two Boys

Aug 09 2010 22:30:48

Margaret, that's an awesome memory and you've given me great hope. My biggest baby starts school next year and like your Max at that age, she's not shy, she LOVES other kids and loves to join in. But I have seen the rejection 'droop' you talked about before and I have to say, as an ex-police officer, I'd rather face an angry man with a gun again than see that ever happen to my baby again. I know it will though, but happily your lovely article reminded me that although the "James" abound in the schoolyard, there are still lovely "Sams" in the world (who you could just grab and kiss for their generosity of spirit!)

#4642



Web Editor

Re:A Tale Of Two Boys

Aug 09 2010 23:00:20

Hello,

I agree with blackette.

I have also seen the rejection droop, and found it so, so heartbreaking!

One time, Aidan called a friend's house to see if he wanted to come around and play. Rather than saying "He is busy" or "We are going out", the mother told Aidan, "No, he

#4643

doesn't want to come and play at your house". I also felt rejected on that occasion! 😞

Have a great day . . .

Siobhan



liz

A Tale Of Two Boys

Aug 10 2010 19:33:07

#4645

A really lovely story, made me a bit teary eyed. It also brought back the memory of when my son was preparing for the end of primary school concert . The popular kids were organising a musical number and told him he couldn't be part of their group. He was totally devastated . I managed to comfort him but my heart was breaking too! I encouraged him to form his own group with the other 'rejects' and they went on to steal the show and to become really best friends.

Another time my youngest son was not invited to a class birthday party that everyone else was going too. It was totally unfair as the birthday boy had been to all of my son's parties. Children really need their parents at these times!



Margaret

A Tale Of Two Boys

Aug 17 2010 09:57:08

#4657

Thanks for the comments, everyone. Good luck next year, blackette. I'm sure your daughter will find starting school a great adventure!

[< Prev](#)

[Next >](#)

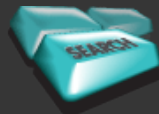
[\[Back \]](#)

Calendar



Check out what's happening near you in our up-to-date calendar!

Directory



Looking to buy, sell or trade something?

Reader Offers



Your chance to win some great prizes.

Store



Browse our Store for magazine subscriptions, family organisers and more...



[Home](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Advertise in our Magazines](#) | [Advertise on Our Site](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

Copyright © 2005 - 2011 Web Child - Australia's Best Online Guide for Parents.